REMARKS

Claims 1-8, 14, 15, and 17 are pending in the present application after this amendment cancels claims 9-13 and 16. Claims 1, 3, 5, 6, 8, 14, 15, and 17 are amended. No new matter is added by the amendments, which are supported throughout the specification and figures. In view of the following remarks, favorable reconsideration of this application is respectfully requested.

The Office Action does not acknowledge the claim of priority and receipt of the priority documents in the present application, which were submitted on April 16, 2004. Applicants respectfully request such acknowledgement in the next communication from the Office.

Claims 12 and 16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 101 because the claimed invention is directed to non-statutory subject matter. The cancellation of these claims obviates this rejection.

Claims 1-5 and 9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as lacking antecedent basis for the limitation "own terminal" in claims 1 and 9. The cancellation of claim 9 obviates the rejection with respect to this claim. Additionally, Applicants submit that the amendment of claim 1 to delete the word "own" avoids the rejection of claims 1-5, and therefore it is respectfully requested that the rejection be withdrawn.

Claims 1-8, 14, 15, and 17 (claims 9-13 and 16 having been cancelled) are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Donley, et al. (US 7,190,948), and further in view of Hind et al. (US 6,823,454). Applicants respectfully traverse.

The Office Action admits that Donley does not disclose details of the request for registration of the network address of the terminal, among other things (Office Action; page 5, lines 15-20). The Office Action relies on Hind as disclosing these elements, and

asserts that the combination of Donley and Hind for the purpose of validating to a requester that the identity is verifies as legitimate before responding with an associated address (Office Action; page 6, lines 14-19, citing Hind). The combination Hind and Donley is selective and is not suggested by either of the references.

Additionally, amended claim 1 requires transmitting a device ID uniquely identifying a terminal and fixedly assigned to the terminal to the authentication server for authentication. For authentication of the terminal, the authentication server refers to the terminal database storing the device ID of the terminal to be authenticated. In other words, so long as a terminal is a legitimate terminal the device ID of which is registered in the terminal database, the terminal is authenticated merely by transmitting the device ID of the terminal to the authentication server. Therefore, the user is relieved from the inconvenience of having to register the user ID and the password in the authentication server and to enter them each time the user accesses the authentication server for authentication, a notable advantage not available in the prior art.

Claim 1 further requires that a management server for managing an IP address is provided separately from the authentication server. When the authentication server succeeds in authenticating the device ID of the terminal, the authentication server issues an ID uniquely identifying the terminal. The management server identifies the terminal using the ID issued by the authentication server. In this approach, the device ID for authenticating the device is not communicated to the management server. Instead, the ID issued by the authenticating server and not capable of authenticating the device is communicated to the management server for identification of the terminal. As such, the claimed invention provides a notable advantage of preventing highly sensitive device IDs from being leaked. The authentication server requires extremely high level of security in order to prevent leakage of the device ID. However, since the device ID is not

communicated to the management server, and the management server identifies the terminal ID issued by the authentication server, the management server may be managed at lower security level than the authentication server 100. Therefore, it is possible to reduce cost necessary for the installation and management of the management server. Since the number of authentication servers, which require high security level, is limited even when a large number of users are managed, maintenance is facilitated and security level is properly ensured. By providing a large number of management servers, which do not require so high a level of security, demands for search are efficiently addressed.

Claim 1 further requires that the authentication server is managed by the maker of the terminal. The maker of the terminal is capable of managing the device IDs of all terminals, registering the IP addresses of the all terminals in a centralized manner, and accepting an inquiry accordingly. Therefore, an individual service provider of a game and the like using the communication between the terminals does not need to provide for the communication management system, also a notable advantage not found in the prior art.

Claim 1 further requires that the management server managing the IP address of the terminal authenticated by the authentication server manages matching of a communication partner between the terminals. The management server receives a requirement for the communication partner, searches the user database on the basis of the requirement, and determines the communication partner. Since the management server manages the IP address of the terminal determined to be the communication partner, the management server is capable of transmitting the IP address of the terminal thus matched to the terminal that has requested the matching. In this way, the terminals matched can communicate each other.

It is respectfully submitted that neither Donley nor Hind discloses or suggests these features of claim 1, and therefore claim 1 is allowable for at least the above reasons.

Independent claims 6, 14, 15, and 17 include at least some of the distinguishing features discussed above in regard to claim 1, and therefore each of these claims is allowable for at least the same reasons as claim 1 is allowable.

Each of the dependent claims is allowable for at least the same reasons as their respective base claim is allowable.

In view of the remarks set forth above, this application is believed to be in condition for allowance which action is respectfully requested. However, if for any reason the Examiner should consider this application not to be in condition for allowance, the Examiner is respectfully requested to telephone the undersigned attorney at the number listed below prior to issuing a further Action.

Any fee due with this paper may be charged to Deposit Account No. 50-1290.

Respectfully submitted,

/Brian E. Hennessey/

Brian E. Hennessey
Reg. No. 51,271

CUSTOMER NUMBER 026304

Telephone: (212) 940-6311
Fax: (212) 940-8986
Docket No.: SCEP 21.113 (100809-00239)
BEH:fd